

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5795
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
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USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, UR, US
SUBJECT: SOVIET TREATMENT OF PRESIDENT'S PRESS
CONFERENCE

SUMMARY - PRAVDA SELECTIVELY REPORTS THE PRESIDENT'S
AUGUST 18 PRESS CONFERENCE, IGNORING HIS COMMENTS
ON CHINA, DESCRIBING THE DEFENSE BUDGET AS AN "ARMS
RACE" BUDGET AND ALLEGING THE PRESIDENT WAS
"CONTRADICTORY" ON US-SOVIET TRADE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRAVDA AUGUST 19 CARRIES TASS SUMMARY FROM
WASHINGTON OF FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY SEGMENTS
OF PRESIDENT'S AUGUST 18 PRESS CONFERENCE. NO
REFERENCE, HOWEVER, IS MADE TO PRESIDENT'S DISCUSSION
OF US-PRC "NORMALIZATION."

2. DEFENSE POLICY - PRESIDENT'S DETAILED EXPLANATION
FOR HIS VETO OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL IS
PROVIDED IN SUMMARY FORM WITHOUT SPECIFIC SUMS
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INVOLVED, EXCEPT REGARDING PROPOSED AIRCRAFT CARRIER
WHICH IS DESCRIBED AS "NEW" (RATHER THAN A "FIFTH")
AND COSTING TWO BILLION DOLLARS. TASS EDITORIALIZES
THAT PRESIDENT'S MAIN CONCERN IS NOT DEFENSE OUTLAYS
THEMSELVES OR THEIR REDUCTION BUT THEIR ALLOCATION
AMONG BUDGET ITEMS "WHICH, IN ANY VARIANT, WAS AND
REMAINS A BUDGET OF THE ARMS RACE."

3. US-SOVIET TRADE - TASS REPLAYS PRESS QUESTION ABOUT UNWILLINGNESS OF "SOME ALLIED NATIONS" TO COOPERATE IN TRADE SANCTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT PRESIDENT'S REPLY WAS, "AS HAS BECOME FREQUENT IN THE LATEST PERIOD, CONTRADICTIONARY." TASS PROCEEDS TO QUOTE MOST OF THE PRESIDENT'S RESPONSE POINTING TO THE DISADVANTAGES OF TRADE EMBARGOES, BUT THEN REWORKS THE BALANCE OF HIS REMARK INTO A PARAPHRASE THAT "HE ADDED THE US IN FUTURE DOES NOT INTEND TO REFUSE TO TAKE DISCRIMINATORY ACTIONS" AGAINST SOVIET TRADE.

4. CAMP DAVID SUMMIT - THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT THAT HE DOES NOT EXPECT FULL SUCCESS OR THE SIGNING OF A PEACE TREATY AT CAMP DAVID BUT HOPES TO ACHIEVE A FRAMEWORK FOR PEACE FOR THE FUTURE IS SUMMARIZED. TASS ALSO CITES THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT THAT HE HAS RECEIVED NO ADVANCE COMMITMENTS FROM SADAT OR BEGIN AND CONCLUDES - EDITORIALIZING AGAIN - "IT IS KNOWN THAT ISRAEL CATEGORICALLY REFUSES TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM THE OCCUPIED RIGHT BANK...AND SATISFY THE (PALESTINIANS') NATIONAL RIGHTS..." TOON

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Message Attributes

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